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ABSTRACT

A study examined the level and type of integration and coordination that exist among local employment and training practitioners and local and state educational agencies and institutions in the delivery of employment and training services as mandated by the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA). To gather data for the study, researchers conducted structured telephone interviews of 583 local employment and training service providers. Based on these data, it appeared that the average private industry council (PIC) consisted of 25 members: 14 from the business sector, 3 from education, 2 from organized labor, 2 from community-based organizations, 1 each from the rehabilitation, employment, service, and economic development sectors, and 1 from other miscellaneous areas. Educational institutions, both public and private, were much more likely to provide training rather than administrative services. A far greater number of service delivery areas (SDAs) were using educational institutions to provide skill training rather than employability development. Less than 10 percent of the respondents specifically stated that they would use public assistance agencies to provide support services to welfare clients using JTPA training. Nearly one-third of the SDAs had developed agreements (financial or otherwise) with local economic development organizations and nearly 100 interviewees said that the SDA would work closely with new and expanding businesses. (MN)

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Job Training
Partnership Act
Research Findings

Partnerships in the New Employment and Training System

Survey Report II

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Elaine Brady, NAB Clearinghouse Manager for Evaluation Studies, managed the data collection effort, directed the analysis, and was the principal author of this report.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE	i
INTRODUCTION	1
KEY FINDINGS	2
REPRESENTATION ON PICS	3
COORDINATION WITH EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES AND INSTITUTIONS	4
COORDINATION WITH THE STATE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE SYSTEM	7
COORDINATION WITH PUBLIC ASSISTANCE AGENCIES	9
COORDINATION WITH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS	10
CONCLUSION	11

PARTNERSHIPS IN THE NEW EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING SYSTEM

Survey Report II

PREFACE

This is the second and final report based on data collected in the National Alliance of Business' 1983 survey of private industry councils and service delivery areas. The first publication, An Overview of the New Job Training System, includes a wide range of information on the state of the new employment and training system in its initial stages of implementation. It provides a comprehensive analysis of the geographic, programmatic, and administrative data collected on the entities surveyed.

This report, Partnerships in the New Employment and Training System, examines the responses provided by local employment and training practitioners to selected questions on the level and type of integration and coordination that exist, or were anticipated, between activities funded under the Job Training Partnership Act and human resource programs. Specifically, this paper discusses the findings on employment and training linkages with local and state educational agencies and institutions, the employment service, public assistance agencies, and economic development organizations.

INTRODUCTION

In order to promote the most efficient use of limited federal dollars, the Job Training Partnership Act of 1982 (JTPA) goes much further than any other employment and training legislation to guarantee that job training programs be coordinated with other state and local employment and training related activities and services. JTPA mandates that publicly-funded employment and training activities be coordinated not only with the vocational education community, but with education in general as well as with the employment service, public assistance agencies, programs for rehabilitation of the handicapped, economic development organizations, and other entities that the governor determines to have a direct impact on job training or human resource utilization within the state.

The importance placed on working in partnership with other programs is evidenced by the requirement that each state prepare a "coordination and special services plan" for approval by the U.S. Department of Labor. This is the only part of the state plan regarding institutional relationships that is enforceable locally; that is, the state plan for coordinating activities must be followed in service delivery area planning, and governors may disapprove local plans that do not adhere to the state criteria.[1]

Numerous provisions in the legislation underscore the philosophy that job training programs must be effectively linked with other human resource programs. JTPA is sprinkled throughout with mandates aimed at advancing a cost-effective, integrated, and coordinated approach to meeting the needs of long-term and structurally unemployed people. Examples of such provisions include the stipulation that geographic boundaries of other state and local agency service programs be taken into consideration when determining the boundaries of a service delivery area (SDA); the requirement that private industry council (PIC) membership include representatives of related agencies and organizations; and the mandate that JTPA funds not be used to duplicate other state and local facilities and services available in the area unless a more effective alternative can be demonstrated.

Because of the importance placed by the law on linking activities and services offered through the Job Training Partnership Act with those provided by other human resource organizations, the National Alliance of Business included a number of questions on those links under Title IIA in its 1983 survey. (Questions on linkages under Title III or state set-aside programs were not subjects of this survey.) A structured telephone interview, consisting of 74 questions, was conducted by National Alliance of Business headquarters staff with local service delivery area or private industry council staff during a two-month period (September and October, 1983). A total of 583, or 98 percent, of the local service delivery areas participated in the study. The questionnaire covered four major areas: the geographic, organizational, programmatic, and financial characteristics of private industry councils and service delivery areas.

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[1]A more detailed explanation of the provisions relating to the state's role in coordinating employment activities with those of other agencies is contained in the Business Working Group for Human Resources' State Policy Directions under the Job Training Partnership Act: The Business Perspective (Washington, DC: National Alliance of Business, January 1983).

The responses to both "closed" as well as "open-ended" questions are analyzed. The "closed" questions covered institutional representation on the private industry council, the entities responsible for the various administrative and programmatic functions undertaken by a service delivery area, and the entities charged with providing training to JTPA participants in fiscal year 1983. The "open-ended" questions included inquiries about the major elements of the SDA's plan with respect to coordinating employment and training with education, welfare, economic development, and the state employment service.[2]

KEY FINDINGS

Key findings from the survey are summarized below:

- The average PIC consists of 25 members: 14 from the business sector, 3 from education, 2 from organized labor, 1 from a rehabilitation organization, 2 from community-based organizations, 1 from the employment service, and 1 other.

- Educational institutions, both public and private, are much more likely to serve as training providers than providers of administrative services (e.g., client intake and job development) -- 551 SDAs are using public educational institutions as training providers and more than half (326) are relying on private schools for that function.

- A far greater number of SDAs are using educational institutions to provide skill training rather than employability development.

- In only one area of direct client services -- job development and placement -- is the employment service directly and significantly involved in a large number of SDAs.

- The employment service is responsible for examining the PIC's plan in only one-fifth of the SDAs.

- In approximately one-third of the SDAs, formal mechanisms have been established to ensure the timely flow of information between the SDA and public assistance agencies in the area.

- Less than 10 percent of the respondents specifically noted that they would use public assistance agencies to provide support services to welfare clients during JTPA training.

- Close to one-third of the SDAs had developed financial and/or nonfinancial agreements with local economic development organizations at the time of interview. Another 100 interviewees stated that the SDA would work closely with new and expanding businesses.

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[2]Responses to the open-ended questions were rarely comprehensive, especially given that interviews were conducted by telephone. Data from the open-ended questions vary in specificity and emphasis. Hence, much of the information analyzed for this report is subjective and relies upon the ability and willingness of the interviewees to provide specific and complete information.

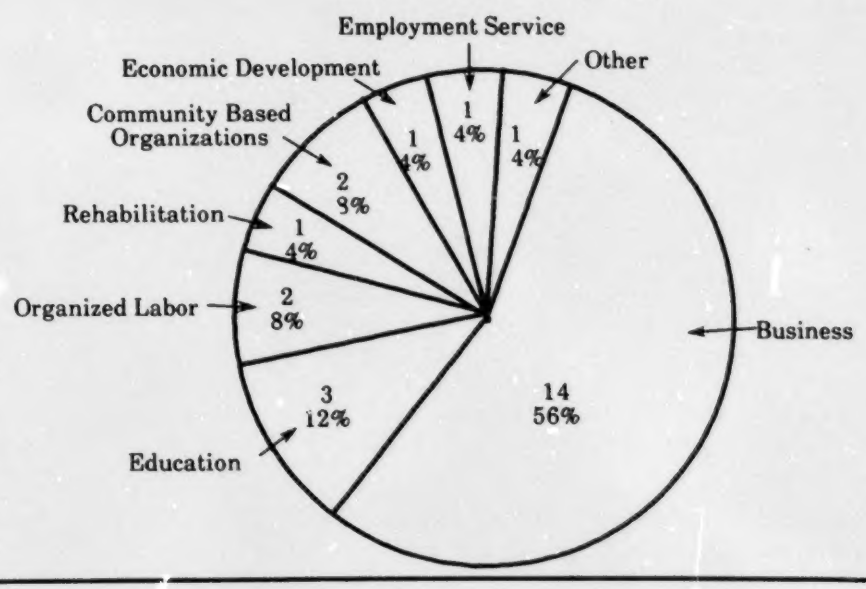
REPRESENTATION ON PICS

According to Section 102 of JTPA, each service delivery area must have a private industry council whose membership includes "representatives of educational agencies (representative of all educational agencies in the service delivery area), organized labor, rehabilitation agencies, community-based organizations, economic development agencies, and the public employment service." Educational representatives are to be selected from among individuals nominated by local educational agencies, vocational education institutions, institutions of higher education, or general organizations of such schools, within the SDA. The only other group on the PIC for which a nomination process is delineated in the law is the private sector. The law also mandates that representatives of the business community constitute a majority of the membership on the PIC; there is no stipulated percentage for any other type of representation on the council.

Although the number of members on individual PICs varies considerably -- from a low of 9 members to a high of 134 -- the average PIC consists of 25 members. Three of these members represent educational interests, and one each represents economic development, rehabilitation, the state employment service, and a non-mandated group. The average PIC also consists of two representatives of organized labor and two representatives of community-based organizations. Thus, with the exception of members from the private sector, who make up 56 percent of the average PIC (14 members), the educational sector is the largest group represented.

TABLE I

Composition of Average PIC



Over 14,000 volunteers nationwide serve on local private industry councils. The breakdown by group represented is approximately 8,500 business, 1,400 education, 650 rehabilitation, 875 organized labor, 1,000 community-based organization, 775 economic development, 625 state employment service, and 500 "other." Although not required by law, representatives of public assistance agencies often serve on the council. The categories of rehabilitation and/or "other" often include staff of state or local public assistance agencies.[3] This is particularly true in PICs with a larger than average number of members.

COORDINATION WITH EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES AND INSTITUTIONS

Educational agencies and institutions are involved in a variety of ways in the actual administration and delivery of services.[4] Specifically, in 31, or 5.3 percent, of the SDAs, educational entities serve as grant recipients and/or program administrators.[5] The overwhelming majority of these educational entities (25) serve in both capacities, while 3 act solely as the grant recipient and 3 serve only as the program administrator. Out of the total 31 educational entities, 28 are community and junior colleges; the remainder include a state university, a school board, and a local educational agency.

In 34 of the 583 service delivery areas which participated in the study, an educational institution or agency is responsible for client outreach and intake functions. In 18 of these 34 SDAs, the educational entity is the sole point of entry for prospective participants; in the remaining 16 SDAs, the educational entity shares outreach and intake responsibility with at least one other organization, most often a unit of state or local government or a community-based organization.

In the majority of SDAs where an educational institution plays a role in the outreach and intake processes, that educational entity serves as grant recipient and/or program administrator. Specifically, 20 out of the 34 educational organizations involved in client intake receive the funds directly from the state and/or are responsible for ensuring the integrity of the overall administration of the program and delivery of services. Also, when an educational entity is involved in intake, usually it is also responsible for the client eligibility determination and certification processes. This is the case in 25 of the 35 service delivery areas where the educational entity provides intake services.

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[3]The Job Training Partnership Act does not mandate participation by welfare agencies on private industry councils; therefore, the exact number of welfare agency representatives was not collected as part of this survey.

[4]For a summary of education's role in JTPA, including those features of the law that have implications for educators, see "Education and the Job Training Partnership Act," Business Currents Technical Report No. 2 (Washington, DC: National Alliance of Business, February 3, 1984). Examples of the ways in which educational agencies and institutions may be involved in the administration and delivery of services are contained in the Business/Education Cooperation Information Packet (Washington, DC: National Alliance of Business, 1984).

[5]Grant recipients and program administrators can be any entity designated by agreement between the PIC and the chief local elected official(s). The local grant recipient is the legal entity which receives the federal funds directly from the state. It is held liable for the fiscal management and use of the funds. The local program administrator is responsible for the day-to-day administrative operations and management of programs. The program administrator can be the same entity as the grant recipient or a separate entity.

The assessment and counseling of participants is performed by educational entities in 51 of the 583 SDAs surveyed, while educational organizations participate in their SDA's job development and placement functions in 42 cases. In approximately one-fourth of these 93 service delivery areas, the educational entity is solely responsible for the assessment and counseling of participants (23 SDAs) and/or takes the lead in job development (17 SDAs).[6]

Educational institutions, both public and private, are much more likely to serve as training providers than as administrators. In fact, the public school system provides most of the skills training. Out of the 583 SDAs on which data were collected, 551 SDAs are using public educational institutions as training providers, and more than half (326) are relying on private schools for that function. It is anticipated that these percentages will increase, because at the time of the survey, a number of SDAs had not completed the process of selecting service providers. Eighty-four were unclear about the role of private, proprietary schools in providing training (14.5%) while 32 were undecided about the role of public education (6.4%). (See Table II, p.6.)

A far greater number of SDAs are using educational institutions to provide skill training activities (activities and instruction directly related to the teaching of specific occupation or job related skills) rather than employability development (those types of activities generally directed at improving an understanding of the labor market, influencing positive work behavior, and upgrading basic learning and communication skills).

Interviewees were asked to characterize the major elements of the plan the SDA devised for linking employment and training with education. For the most part, the responses can be grouped into one of two general categories: 1) financial and/or non-financial linkages with a specific type of educational institution; or 2) the provision of training or some other service by a level of the educational system.

Almost half (253) of interviewees indicated that, at the time of contact, nonfinancial as well as financial linkages had or would be established between the educational community and the SDA. In another 62 SDAs, interviewees stated that all efforts at collaboration would be nonfinancial in nature. For the most part, such linkages were formal agreements to work with the schools in the area of youth programs (summer youth, school-to-work, in-school, drop-out prevention, try-out employment) or for career and vocational exploration programs.

In approximately two-thirds of the SDAs (416), respondents stated that the SDA had established a financial agreement, contract and/or subcontract with at least one educational entity to provide administrative, direct client, or training services. The majority of these agreements are with vocational/technical schools, community colleges, and public high schools (210, 202, and 198, respectively). A significantly smaller number of SDAs are using the services of four-year colleges and universities (87) or state/regional skills training centers (78).

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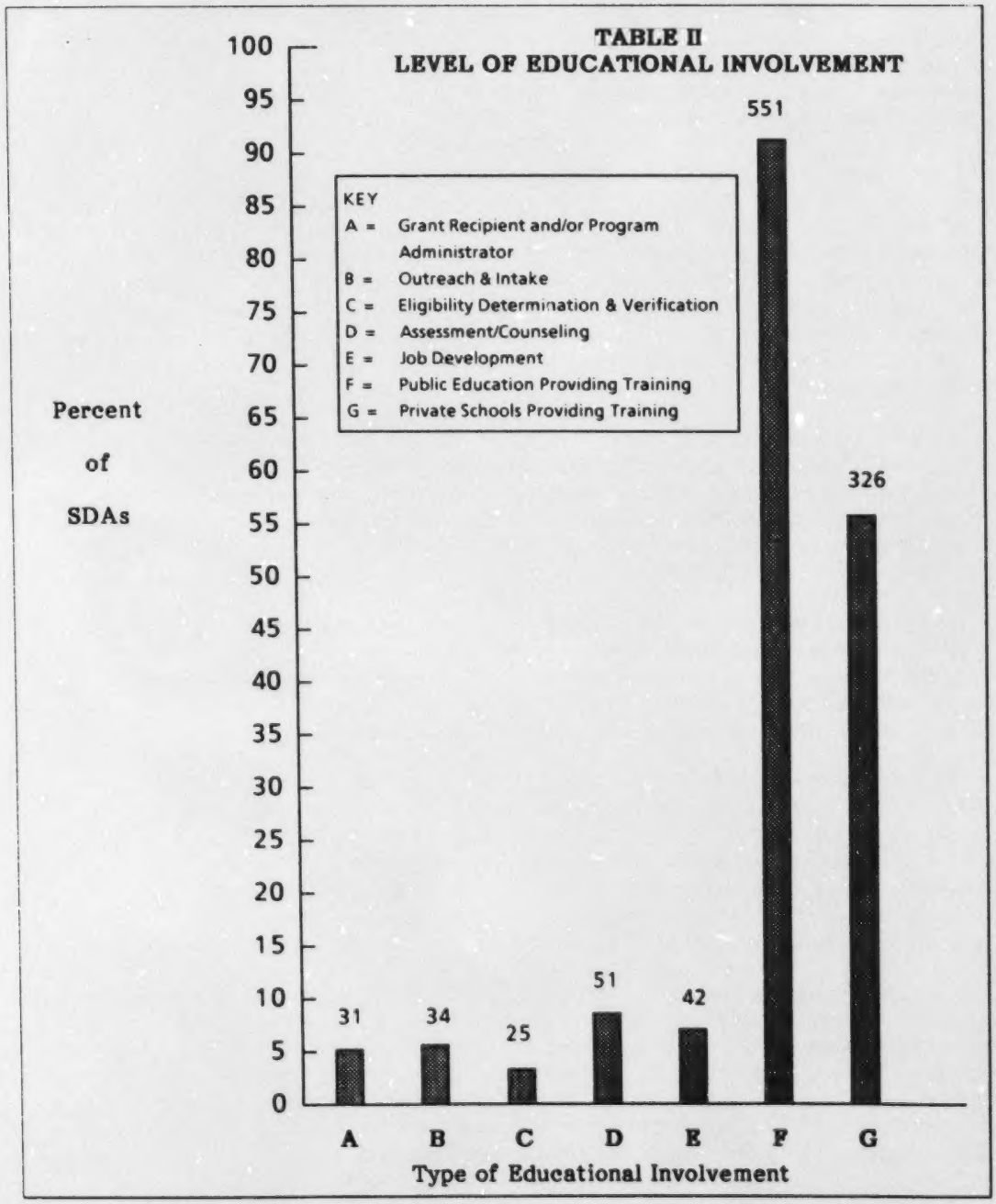
[6]In only 17 SDAs does an educational entity serve as grant recipient and program administrator as well as play a role in the delivery of all four direct client services: intake, eligibility determination, assessment/counseling, and job development.



Other less frequent responses to this open-ended inquiry regarding linkages between education and employment and training included: the formation of a PIC committee to work closely with the educational community; plans to carry out labor market information studies utilizing staff and resources of educational institutions; and free use of facilities, space, and materials.

COORDINATION WITH THE STATE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE SYSTEM

Because one of the major roles of the employment service is to act as an intermediary in the labor exchange process through intake and job referral, it was the intent of Congress that, whenever possible, administrators of JTPA programs would collaborate with the local agencies to ensure a cost-effective, integrated system of serving area residents. In fact, the new legislation amended the Wagner-Peyser Act, which authorizes the functions of the public employment service offices. Under the amendments, the employment service is required to develop "applicable components" of its plans jointly with PICs and local elected officials. Before the employment service plan is submitted to the U.S. Department of Labor, it must be sent to the State Job Training Coordinating Council. The state council's role is to certify that the local employment service plans have been jointly agreed upon with the PIC and that they are consistent with the governor's coordination and special services plan.[7]

Analysis of the data collected on the operational components of the SDAs indicates, however, that only in one area of direct client services -- job development and placement -- is the employment service directly and significantly involved with the SDA's programs. State employment service offices play a major role in job development and placement activities of JTPA terminees in almost half of the SDAs (279). Generally, these functions are shared between the state agency and at least one other entity (primarily the PIC or the training provider). In only 58 cases is the employment service the sole provider of activities related to job placement.

In those service delivery areas where interviewees indicated that the employment service was not responsible for job development and placement activities (304), respondents were queried as to the nature of the relationship between this state agency and the placement entity(ies). Almost half of these interviewees (131) indicated that although the employment service was not directly responsible for placement-oriented activities of JTPA participants, an informal referral system was in effect between the employment service and the placement entity; one-third indicated that a non-financial or coordination agreement was being worked out. The sharing of labor market information in monthly meetings attended by staff of the placement agencies and the employment service was identified by 53 of the respondents, while another 39 indicated that a cooperative relationship was in the process of being developed between them.

Less than one-third of the SDAs use the services of this state network in outreach and intake, or in client eligibility processes (166 and 164, respectively). However, when the employment service is involved in delivering these services, it tends to be the only entity directly responsible for these functions: 123 for client outreach and intake; 130 for eligibility determination and certification. Furthermore, when the employment service is responsible for one of these two functions, it is usually responsible for the other. Thus, it would appear that even though a majority of service delivery areas are not using their public employment service agencies for these particular functions, in those SDAs where it is being relied upon, it is the entity most responsible for getting clients into the local JTPA system.

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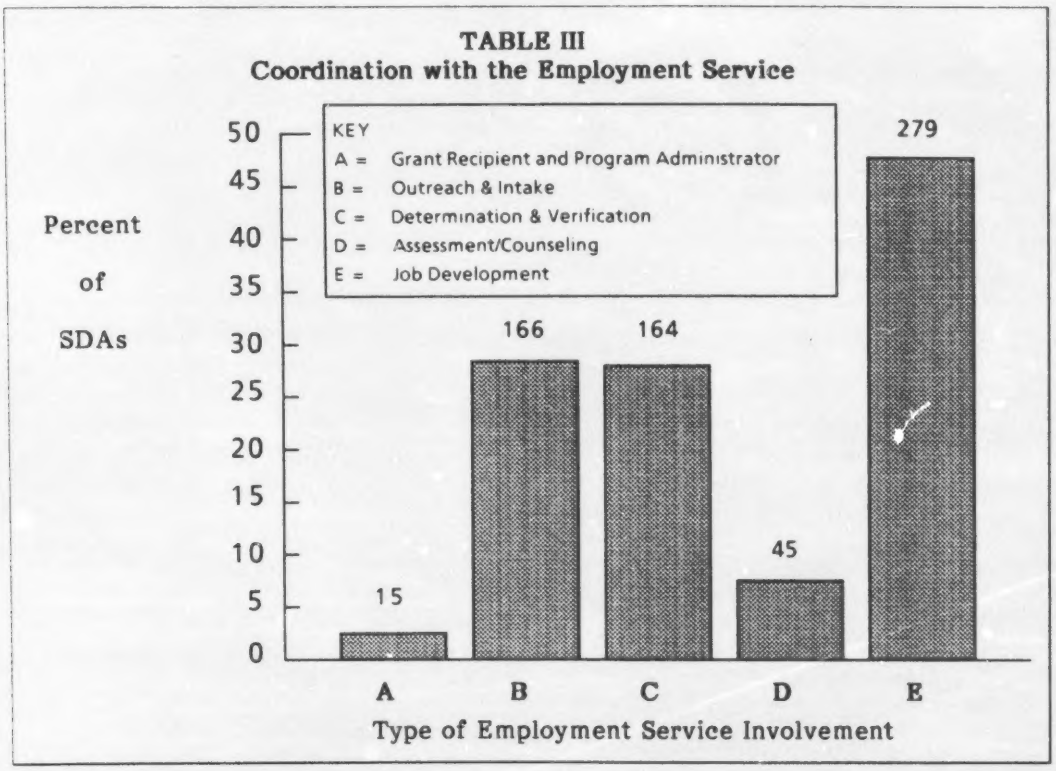
[7]In some states, the governor's coordination and special services plan mandates that the employment service be used to perform specific functions. For a detailed analysis of employment service planning, see "New Directions for Employment Service Planning," Business Currents Technical Report No. 4 (Washington, DC: National Alliance of Business, March 2, 1984).

A smaller number of SDAs are using the employment service for the assessment and counseling of participants (45) than are utilizing it in the intake and eligibility verification functions. Also, when the employment service is participating in the assessment and counseling of clients, these responsibilities are usually shared with training providers or educational institutions.

State agencies are functioning as grant recipients and/or program administrators in 48 of the service delivery areas. In about one-third of these service delivery areas (15), the employment service acts as both grant recipient and program administrator. (In no case does the employment service serve in only one of these two capacities.) Interestingly, 10 of these 15 state agencies are located in two states: six in Idaho (the total number of SDAs for that state) and four out of the 12 local employment and training jurisdictions in Minnesota.

TABLE III
Coordination with the Employment Service



Several interviewees (26) stated that no linkage existed, or was likely to develop between the SDA administrative agency or the PIC and the local employment service agency. Some of these JTPA administrators felt that the bureaucratic structure or geographic location of employment service offices barred coordination with that agency; others felt the employment service charged too much for its service. Also, several of the respondents (13) indicated that the representative of the employment service who sits on the PIC would be the only linkage between the SDA and the state office.

Under the new law, the employment service agency continues to have the lead responsibility for developing the employment service plan. However, as noted earlier, for those components of the employment service plan applicable to each job training

service delivery area (corresponding to each PIC), the employment service office is required to involve the PIC and chief elected official in developing "applicable components of the plan" and must take "into consideration proposals developed by the PIC and chief elected official(s)."

Interviewees were asked what procedures were established to ensure an adequate review of the plans by the employment service and the PIC. (There is no legal requirement that local JTPA plans be reviewed by the employment service.) A review of the responses to this question indicates that on the whole, although PICs are involved in some way in reviewing appropriate sections of the employment service's plan, no reciprocal process was developed to ensure review of the PIC plan. Only about one-fifth of the interviewees indicated that the employment service was responsible for examining the service delivery area's plan (123).

With respect to review of the employment service's plan by the PIC, over one-third (208) of the respondents indicated that the PIC had formed a committee to oversee this task. A number of interviewees stated that the PIC, or SDA staff, was actually responsible for developing the appropriate sections of the employment service plan, while others indicated that the PIC jointly developed the plan with the employment service (66 and 51, respectively). Other less frequent responses included: the employment service representative who sits on the PIC developed related portions of the employment service plan (13); the employment service is the grant recipient or program administrator, thus ensuring adequate review of the plans developed for JTPA and the employment service (15); and a monitoring system is in the process of being developed to ensure adherence to the legal requirements (15).

COORDINATION WITH PUBLIC ASSISTANCE AGENCIES

A relatively small number of grant recipients and program administrators are public assistance agencies: 14 local government entities and four state units. In seven of these 18 service delivery areas, public assistance agencies are the entities responsible for intake, eligibility determination, assessment and job development. In another two of these SDAs, the public assistance agencies are responsible only for client outreach and intake as well as eligibility determination and verification; while in another two of the SDAs, the welfare agencies are only charged with the assessment and job development functions.[8] For the most part, these functions are shared between the public assistance agencies and at least one other entity.

Interviewees were asked to discuss the major elements of the plan the service delivery area devised for linking employment and training with welfare. An analysis of the data indicates that, although JTPA administrators are aware of the need to share resources with public assistance agencies, the nature of the linkages was not defined at the time of interview.

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[8]Due to the manner in which the data were collected, it was impossible to determine whether a public assistance agency was involved in providing any of the direct client services, except in those cases where the grant recipient or program administrator is a public assistance agency.

Approximately one-third of the interviewees (216) stated that formal mechanisms had been established to ensure that information flowed easily between the two types of human resource agencies. Many of these respondents indicated that the SDA staff had already scheduled meetings with representatives of public assistance agencies to avoid duplication of efforts. Almost 10 percent (55) of the interviewees noted that their SDA was offering a program targeted for welfare recipients and that they would be working closely with the relevant public assistance agencies in the outreach to and intake of participants as well as in program design.

In spite of the 15 percent limitation on the use of the SDA's funds for participant support services, less than 10 percent of the respondents (48) specifically indicated that they would use public assistance agencies to provide support services to welfare clients during JTPA training. However, several respondents noted that the issue of the level of support services had not yet been addressed by the SDA.

COORDINATION WITH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS

As was the case with public assistance agencies, a relatively small number of economic development organizations (20) are functioning as grant recipients and/or program administrators. In the majority of these service delivery areas, the economic development organization is responsible for client outreach and intake as well as job development and placement (14 and 16 SDAs, respectively). The economic development organization is responsible for both of these functions in 12 of the 20 SDAs. In six of the service delivery areas, eligibility determination and verification falls within the purview of the economic development entity, while it is responsible for the counseling and assessment of clients in five of the SDAs. (In only four of the 20 SDAs, economic development organizations serve as grant recipients and program administrators as well as play a role in the delivery of all four direct client services: intake; eligibility determination; assessment/counseling, and job development).[9]

Interviewees were asked to characterize the major elements of the SDA's plan as it pertained to linking local employment and training activities with those taking place in the economic development community. Close to one-third of the respondents (187) indicated that their SDA established financial and/or nonfinancial agreements with local economic development organizations. Many of these SDAs are working closely with the local chamber of commerce and with industrial development authorities. A small number of the interviewees mentioned that strong agreements had been established between their SDA and state economic development entities.

The agreements with local and state economic development organizations cover a multitude of functions, the most common of which is sharing of resources for the development and implementation of labor market studies, employer surveys, and employer outreach activities. A smaller number of SDAs has agreed to serve as a resource center or business directory for employers, city planners and city economic directors, with assistance from local economic development organizations.

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[9]Due to the manner in which data were collected, it could not be determined whether an economic development organization participated in the delivery of any of the four direct client services, except in those cases where the grant recipient or program administrator is an economic development organization.

Close to 100 of the respondents (98) stated specifically that the SDA intended to take an active approach to working with new and expanding businesses in their jurisdiction in the area of employment and training. In the majority of these SDAs, service delivery area staff appear to be pursuing such linkages without any formal or informal agreement with the economic development community.

Other less frequent responses to this open-ended inquiry regarding coordination between economic development and job training included: the PIC has formed a subcommittee to work solely on ecomonic development issues (31); the SDA has applied for grant money, or intends to respond to requests for proposals developed by economic development organizations (44); and the SDA has received, or expects to be the recipient of, community development block grants (CDBGs).

A small number of the interviewees stated that, because of their limited funding, the SDA had no plans to work on economic development organizations. Another 59 respondents stated that their SDA had not yet determined the level or type of activities it would undertake with respect to economic development. Also, a number of the respondents (17) indicated that the representative of the economic development community who sits on the PIC would most likely be the only linkage between the SDA and economic development entities.

CONCLUSION

The strength of the Job Training Partnership Act is its emphasis on a partnership. The partnership is created so that public and private community leaders and institutions can contribute their special expertise to ensure a cost-effective and integrated approach to meeting the needs of the long-term and structurally unemployed individual. When JTPA is evaluated, the involvement and contribution of the education, public assistance and economic development communities as well as the public employment service will be an important measure of the law's success.

Close analysis of the data shows that during JTPA's nine month transition period, PICs and SDAs were just beginning to form effective working relationships with local and state human resource agencies and institutions. While some PICs and SDAs appear to have developed good strategies for coordination and effective resource utilization of related activities and services, others appear to have given little thought to such endeavors. Interviewees from many of the SDAs indicated that, at the time of the interview, it was too early to determine whether the level and type of coordination sought for by the legislation would occur -- data analyzed in this report supports this belief. It is expected that information collected in NAB's 1984 survey of PICs and SDAs will provide a more conclusive picture.